



# Spring 2011 Newsletter

**Fleet Management  
Services**

April 2011

## Fleet Management Updates

Hi, I am **Harmony Wilder**. I have been the Fleet Manager since late May of 2010. I am pleased to be able to view the Fleet program from this perspective and believe my experiences as a past fleet customer will benefit the program. I am interested to administer the program in a manner that is most cost effective for the departments and agencies we serve and in the best interest of the State. I am available anytime to answer your questions.

I also want to introduce **Jim Saunders** who joined FMS as the Fleet Operations Assistant in early December of 2010. Jim is a great addition to the program; he brings a commitment to the importance of good customer service. He is glad to be back in Waterbury and is busy learning the many components of the program.

Both Jim and I have worked for State government for several years and have a strong background in financial management and business administration. We look forward to serving your state travel needs.

## Pothole Problems Plague Vermont Drivers

It's springtime in Vermont, and spring inevitably brings with it those dreaded potholes and frost heaves. It seems each year they get worse, or maybe it just seems that way when you hit one. If you can safely avoid one, by all means do; slowing down is the best approach. The harder you hit one, the more potential damage to your vehicle. The following are excerpts from a recent WCAX news story:

*No matter what the street, no matter what the town - a lot of drivers are cursing these days. And that means pothole season is officially in full swing. "This is the worst I've seen in a long time," said Les Allen of Midas. Shelburne Road in Burlington looks more like hubcap alley. "Some are bigger than the steering wheel. The tire can fit right in," said Joy Marshant of Burlington. The phones are ringing off the hook in many town offices with callers complaining about the depth of the craters, some of which you can drop more than five phone books into. Potholes do mean big business. Tire shops are struggling to keep up. "A lot of bent rims and a lot of expensive rims too," Allen said. The state typically spends about \$1.5 million patching potholes each year. This season transportation officials expect to exceed that. More than \$1 million has already been spent. "With all this snow and all this melting of it, every day will be a new day to create potholes, so I think it will be bad news," said Steve Goodkind of Burlington Public Works.*

*But it's not as bad as three years ago. 2008 was one of the worst pothole seasons on record because of all the freezing and thawing we saw that year coupled with a lot of snow. But that's little comfort to drivers now who are at their wits' end after being jarred one too many times. "You hit one, it sounds like the car's going to fall apart!" one driver commented.*

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**Michael Obuchowski, Commissioner**  
Department of Buildings &  
General Services

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**Government Business Services**  
Division

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Do you have questions you would like Fleet Management to answer in the next newsletter? If so, send your questions to the following email address and indicate that it is a Newsletter question:

**fleet.services@state.vt.us**

## Watch for Ice Patches

Another springtime phenomenon to contend with is above freezing temperatures during the day and freezing temperatures overnight. Although a good combination for a sap run, it can spell disaster for morning commuters. As the snow melts during those warmer temperatures and water runs across roadways, the freezing temperatures cause icing on the roadways. Being aware and paying close attention to the road ahead helps avoid any mishap.

## Vehicle Preventive Maintenance

We have recently made improvement to our vehicle management system which allows us to more accurately predict when each vehicle is due for routine maintenance.

Preventive maintenance intervals for passenger vehicles remains the same:

- Synthetic lube, oil and filter (LOF) and tune-up (per manufacturer's specifications) every 10,000 miles or every 12 months, whichever occurs first.
- Tire rotations every 10,000 miles or every 12 months, whichever occurs first.
- Vermont State Inspection annually

Your FMS service technician is available to answer any questions related to scheduled maintenance.

## Emergency Road Side Assistance

Please double check your fleet vehicle's red handbook to make sure it contains up-to-date emergency contact information. We recommend keeping this handbook in the vehicle.

Your vehicle handbook provides emergency procedures including how to contact the Fleet Rescue Program at toll-free (866) 329-3471. The book also features instructions about what to do if you break down or are involved in the automobile accident. If you do not have this information available in your fleet vehicle, please contact Angela Willcocks at [angela.willcocks@state.vt.us](mailto:angela.willcocks@state.vt.us) to request a copy.

**IMPORTANT: When calling for roadside assistance, you MUST have the Wright Express Fuel Card with you. A statewide commonly used vendor list is also included in your vehicle's red handbook to assist you with locating a nearby tow or service station.**

## Clean Vehicles

It is the responsibility of the leasing department to initiate vehicle cleaning. It is recommended that each vehicle be cleaned once a month. You may:

- Take the vehicle to a vendor who accepts the Wright Express fuel card for payment or is willing to record the vehicle plate number, obtain driver's signature, and direct bill FMS; or
- Schedule a weekend cleaning at the Montpelier or Waterbury FMS motor pool sites by contacting the FMS office (241-4500) in advance.



## Fleet Management Services Vehicle Idling Policy

The following policy became effective March 18, 2011:

### Department of Buildings & General Services

#### Fleet Management Services

#### Vehicle Idling Policy

Fuel costs, health and air quality concerns, and common sense make it appropriate to limit vehicle idling to only that which is absolutely necessary to meet the mission of the agency/ department using Fleet Management Services (FMS) vehicles. Fleet Management Services is committed to implementing practices that will reduce the adverse impact of unnecessary vehicle idling. This policy shall not apply in any situation in which the health or safety of a driver or passenger requires the idling of the vehicle.

Effectively immediately, FMS vehicles should not be left idling while parked, attended or unattended, for more than five (5) consecutive minutes within any 60 minute period unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- The unit is forced to remain motionless due to traffic conditions over which the operator has no control;
- The unit is involved in valid law enforcement activities;
- The unit is in the process of being maintained, repaired, or tested, and those activities require idling;
- The unit is being operated to defrost a windshield;
- The unit is providing auxiliary power to another piece of equipment;

It should be noted that the demands of radio monitoring and strobe light operation are generally modest and often overestimated. That equipment should be operated on battery power to the extent practical. Good judgment should be employed to balance the need to provide power to this equipment while limiting idling to a minimum.

Extreme weather operation as defined below:

Below 0°F (-18°C), there is no time restriction on idling, provided no nuisance is thereby created;

Hot weather does not justify idling to operate an air-conditioning system, except in the case of an immediate safety concern.

A vehicle operating inside a garage represents an immediate and real health concern, even with bay doors open. Such idling shall be kept to an absolute minimum. Engines shall be run only as necessary to safely pull a vehicle into or out of a garage bay, including the time necessary to build adequate air pressure for brake systems if appropriate. If a garage is equipped with a vehicle exhaust ventilation system, that system should be connected to a vehicle as soon as possible.

## Vermont's New Texting While Driving Law

Effective June 1, 2010:

**All drivers** are prohibited from texting while operating a moving motor vehicle on a highway. Only drivers under the age of 18 are prohibited from other use of portable electronic devices.

### **What is the legal definition of "texting" according to this law?**

Texting is: Reading or manually composing, or sending of electronic communications. Electronic communications include text messages, instant messages, or e-mails using a portable electronic device.

### **What is considered a "portable electronic device"?**

A portable electronic device includes (but is not limited to) a cellular telephone, a personal digital assistant (PDA), and laptop computers. Use of a GPS or navigational system is permitted.

For complete text of this bill see Senate Bill 280 (S. 280) [Act 150 of 2010] at the following link:

<http://www.leg.state.vt.us/docs/acts.cfm?Session=2010>

## WHEN YOU RETURN YOUR FLEET MOTOR POOL VEHICLE

Please take the opportunity to communicate any comments or concerns regarding our service or the vehicle you are returning, using the "Customer Satisfaction Survey" provided on the back of the envelope, so that we may address them and make improvements to our service.

## FLEET VEHICLES FOR SALE

Fleet vehicles currently for sale are advertised on the web using Craigslist <http://burlington.craigslist.org>; use search terms "State Fleet" and look for ads posted by State of Vermont Fleet Management Services.

Vehicles may also be sold via online auction at [Auctions International](#).

You are also welcome to stop in or call us at (802) 241-4500 to schedule a time to view Fleet vehicles available for sale.

## QUESTIONS/COMPLIMENTS/COMPLAINTS - WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK

We want your feedback! Please email us with questions, compliments or concerns at: [fleet.services@state.vt.us](mailto:fleet.services@state.vt.us).

Or you may provide your Fleet comments to BGS directly at:

[BGS Customer Comment Form](#)

We also provide an online form for Fleet vehicle complaints at:

[http://bgs.vermont.gov/business\\_services/fleet/complaint](http://bgs.vermont.gov/business_services/fleet/complaint)

We will soon be sending a survey to our leased vehicle departments and motor pool vehicle users. We encourage you to complete the survey so that your input can be used to help us as we continue making improvements to our service.

## SERVICE TECHNICIAN ASSIGNMENT

Each Department has a Service Technician assigned to assist in regularly maintaining your vehicles. If you have questions about your Fleet vehicles, contact your assigned Technician as listed below.

<b>AGING &amp; INDEP. LIVING</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>HUMAN SERVICES/SEC</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>AGRICULTURE</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>JUDICIAL/COURT ADMIN</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>ANR/ENFORCEMENT</b>	Chuck Pilette	<b>LANDS, FOREST &amp; PARKS</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>AOT</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>LIBRARIES</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>ATTORNEY GENERAL</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>LIQUOR CONTROL</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>BGS</b>	Chuck Pilette	<b>LOTTERY</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>CORRECTIONS</b>	Chuck Pilette	<b>MENTAL HEALTH/VSH</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>CRIMINAL JUSTICE</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>MOTOR POOL</b>	Chuck Pilette
<b>DCF</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>MOTOR VEHICLE</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>DEC</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>OEO</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>DEFENDER GENERAL</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>PUBLIC SERVICE</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>DII</b>	Chuck Pilette	<b>SEC OF STATE</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>FORESTRY</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>SRS/WOODSIDE</b>	Andy Cruickshank
<b>HEALTH</b>	Andy Cruickshank	<b>TAX</b>	Andy Cruickshank

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